Institutional Compact: Rationales for Targets on Metrics

In October of 2013, the Board approved target metrics and rationales for the new Institutional Compact. The Higher Education Policy Commission reviewed West Liberty’s submission and shared the results of their review in a telephone conference call with WLU administrators on Friday, January 10, 2014. As a result, West Liberty has revised their submission and increased target numbers in a few areas. The full submission is provided, and revised target numbers are highlighted in yellow.

The HEPC maintains that no institution will be penalized for aspiring to achieve, and they commended West Liberty for including two optional reporting areas (research and development) and (faculty peer-reviewed publication) into our Compact.

The HEPC is requesting that the Board approve the revisions, and resubmit the document before the February meeting of the HEPC.

**I. Access**

**Metric: Fall Headcount Enrollment**

**Target: 2820**

During the fall 2013, our early enrollment headcount indicates a drop in enrollment for the first time in eight years. We are also experiencing a decline in graduating classes in many of our feeder high schools. Although we are developing additional graduate programs, it is difficult for us to forecast a significant increase at this time.

**Metric: Annualized FTE**

**Target: 2652**

During the fall 2013, our early enrollment headcount indicates a drop in enrollment for the first time in eight years. We are also experiencing a decline in graduating classes in many of our feeder high schools. We are also seeing more students enrolling part-time in order to hold down a part-time job. We have changed our class schedule format to the traditional MWF – TTH class times in order to try and give students more flexibility with their class scheduling. However, at this time we are not sure of the immediate impact this will have on FTE.

**Metric: Fall First-Time Freshmen Headcount**

**Target: 525**

During the fall 2013, our early enrollment headcount indicates a continued drop in first time freshman enrollment. We are experiencing a decline in graduating classes in many of our feeder high schools. We are expanding our recruiting efforts further south into North Carolina, and to the east coast. We believe this will assist in bringing additional first-time freshman to our campus. However, we do not think this will result in a significant increase immediately.

**Metric: Fall Low-Income Student Headcount**

**Target: 1170**

We believe we may have reached a plateau in this area. We are seeing an increased number of low income students with significant need opt to attend community colleges due to costs. We are also seeing many students attending community colleges one a year or two to keep loan debt to a minimum. The Federal Pell Grant has not kept pace with the increase in costs, making enrollment difficult for some low income students.

**Metric: Fall Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Group Headcount**

**Target: 160**

We have seen an increase in this area and believe we will continue to grow as we expand our recruiting efforts into more urban areas. However, cost and loan debt continue to be a hindrance to some students from some of the minority groups.

**Metric: Fall Adult Headcount**

**Target: 360**

We believe enrollment will increase as we expand our graduate programs and the BLA Program at the Highlands.
II. Success

A. Developmental Education Outcomes

Metric: Students Passing Developmental Courses-Math
Target: 80%

With assistance from the WV Completion Innovation Challenge Subgrant, West Liberty will offer developmental math in a modular format beginning in the fall of 2013. This reform should dramatically increase the number of students clearing developmental math within an academic year.

Metric: Students Passing Developmental Courses-English
Target: 85%

With assistance from the WV Completion Innovation Challenge Subgrant, West Liberty will offer developmental English in an advanced learning program system that will mainstream students and provide tutorials.

Metric: Students Passing Developmental Courses and a College-Level Course-Math
Target: 50%

Success rates should increase as a direct result of collaboration between the developmental and college-level instructors coupled with targeted content for gateway courses and a continual sequence of math courses.

Metric: Students Passing Developmental Courses and a College-Level Course-Math
Target: 75%

Due to the recent changes in course format and instruction, along with the addition of tutorial assistance, a stronger success rate for simultaneous passage of both courses is anticipated.

B. Retention

Metric: Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen
Target: 77 to 79%

Many students do not return who have lost financial aid funding as a result of unsatisfactory academic progress. A new course will be required for students on academic probation that will provide study-skills training and education on how to maintain financial aid funding.

Metric: Part-Time, First-Time Freshmen
Target: 35%

A traditional class schedule format is implemented that will provide more flexibility for part-time students.

Metric: Low-Income First-Time Freshmen
Target: 73%

An in-house early academic alert system is implemented that will help to identify at risk low income, first generation students.

Metric: Returning Adults
Target: 68% to 70.5%

Significant issues exist with academic advising for returning adults and improvements will be implemented. However, it will be a challenge to meet the established target number.

Metric: Transfer Students
Target: 78%

A scholarship is implemented for qualifying transfer students that will hopefully increase their retention and move West Liberty within the target number range.

Metric: Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Group First-Time Freshmen
Target: 68%

An in-house early academic alert system is implemented that will help to identify at risk underrepresented racial and ethnic minority students.
C. Progress Toward Degree
Metric: First-Time Freshmen Earning 30 Hours
Target: 63%
An increase in students earning 30+ credit-hours has been realized as a result of better education through first year seminar, Black and Gold Day presentations, and financial aid seminars on the benefits of maintaining 30+ plus credit hours to retain financial aid and scholarship monies.

D. Four-Year Graduation Rates
Metric: First-Time Freshmen
Target: 20% increased to 22%
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Low-Income First-Time Freshmen
Target: 13% increased to 15%
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Returning Adults
Target: 51% increased to 54%
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Transfer Students
Target: 43% increased to 45%
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Group First-Time Freshmen
Target: 10% increased to 12%
Target number is based on average and past trends.

E. Six-Year Graduation Rates
Metric: First-Time Freshmen
Target: 42.5
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Low-Income First-Time Freshmen
Target: 35
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Returning Adults
Target: 62.5
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Transfer Students
Target: 54
Target number is based on average and past trends.

Metric: Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Group First-Time Freshmen
Target: 21% increased to 24%
Target number is based on average and past trends.
III. Impact

A. Degrees Awarded

Metric: Total Degrees Awarded
Target: 497

Growth in West Liberty’s Masters Degree Programs will assist in achieving the target number.

Metric: Associate's Degrees Awarded
Target: 34

An Associate Degree is offered only in the Dental Hygiene Program, and after earning an Associate Degree most DH students continue for more two more years and earn a bachelor's degree. Due to the unique nature of this program the number of degrees awarded varies slightly from year-to-year, and limited growth is anticipated.

Metric: Bachelor's Degrees Awarded
Target: 412

In 2012-13 there was a spike in undergraduate degrees awarded. Consequently, a realistic target number is provided that better reflects the previous years’ norm.

Metric: Master's Degrees Awarded
Target: 51

During the last five years West Liberty awarded its first Masters Degrees. Currently, there are only two Masters Degrees available, but as these program mature and as new Masters Degree programs are approved and initiated, a significant increase in master's degrees is anticipated.

Metric: STEM Degrees Awarded
Target: 48

The number of degrees awarded in STEM is not expected to increase drastically. However, a STEM field enrollment increase may be realized due to program changes and the recent addition of the M.S. Physician Assistant Studies Program.

Metric: STEM Education Degrees Awarded
Target: 13

The number of graduates in STEM Education has fluctuated in previous years and with concerted efforts WLU can hopefully maintain the latest trend of degrees awarded in STEM Education.

Metric: Health Degrees Awarded
Target: 123

The Health professions should be able to maintain previous year's numbers if not slightly increase. The M.S. Physician Assistant Studies is estimated to graduate 18 students each year.

B. Federal Student Loan Cohort Default Rate

Metric: Three-Year Rate
Target: 12%

West Liberty University is working to improve financial literacy through online and classroom education. Entrance (summer orientation) and exit (graduation fair) counseling is a primary focus of the Financial Aid office. One-on-one counseling is available for students at orientation to ensure appropriate/adequate loans are borrowed. Delinquent borrowers are contacted and every effort is made to put them back in contact with their loan services and repayment efforts.
C. Research and Development (required for WVU and Marshall University, optional for all others)

Metric: Research Grants and Contracts
Target: $453,372

We anticipate a one-percent increase in grants and contracts based on availability of federal grant opportunities.

Metric: Peer-Reviewed Publications by Faculty
Target: 14

We anticipate a gradual increase in the number of faculty submitting their work, but since we have not tracked this previously, the number may be larger than anticipated.